



## Keratoconus

Keratoconus is a condition that is associated with thinning and distortion of the cornea, which is the front clear surface of the eye. Keratoconus occurs in approximately 50-200 out of every 100,000 people. Keratoconus may run in the family. Keratoconus can occur as an isolated condition or may be associated with other eye conditions or general health problems including aniridia, retinitis pigmentosa, Down's syndrome, and Marfan's syndrome.

As the cornea becomes too thin in keratoconus, the surface of the cornea becomes uneven and your vision may become blurry. This is a condition that generally affects both eyes but one may be more severely distorted than the other. Patients who wear contact lenses may find that their contacts do not work well and do not seem to fit properly. Vision may also appear blurred with glasses. Over time, progressive thinning of the cornea may lead to blurred vision that cannot be corrected by contact lenses or glasses.

There are two surgical treatments for keratoconus, intrastromal corneal ring segments or INTACS® and corneal transplantation with Femtosecond laser. With the INTACS® procedure, two tunnels are made in the middle layer of the cornea (stroma) and two C-shaped plastic ring segments are inserted, during a 10-15 minute painless procedure. The rings reshape the cornea, which helps to restore the cornea to a more normal shape. This, in turn, helps to improve the vision with glasses and/or contact lenses.

When there is advanced keratoconus, with extreme cornea thinning and/or corneal scarring, a corneal transplant may be the only treatment option. At Northwest Eye Surgeons, we use a Femtosecond laser for cornea transplantation. The Femtosecond laser keratoplasty allows for a more exact tissue fit and usually allows for faster healing and faster visual recovery. Northwest Eye Surgeons is the first in Washington State to provide this laser technology for corneal transplantation.

If you have keratoconus, you should keep regularly scheduled appointments with your eye doctor in order to monitor the health of your corneas.